

STATE OF NEW YORK LEGISLATURE OF ERIE COUNTY

BUFFALO, NEW YORK, OCTOBER 9, 2015 A.D.

MEMORIAL RESOLUTION IN REMEMBRANCE OF SHARON ANN THOMAS

WHEREAS, Sharon Ann Thomas was born July 25, 1951 to the late Ruby Thomas and the late William Chandler in Buffalo, New York; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was a product of the Buffalo public schools and graduated from East High School and then earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Business Administration from Daemen College; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Sharon applied for employment under the federally funded CETA program. She was hired and assigned to Buffalo City Court as an Information Aide. This was the beginning of her remarkable career in the Court system. As she worked her way up in the court system, Sharon was a Court Assistant, Criminal Records Clerk and Head Teller. In 1981, Sharon was promoted to the position of Deputy Chief Clerk, a job she held for eighteen years; and

WHEREAS, Sharon made history on April 1, 1999 when she was appointed as the Chief Clerk of Buffalo City Court and was sworn in by Justice Samuel L. Green at a public ceremony. She was the first African American to hold the Chief Clerk position outside the New York City area; and

WHEREAS, in 2000, Sharon was the recipient of the prestigious Unified Court System Merit Performance Award, which was presented to her during the Law Day celebration at the State Court of Appeals in Albany; and

WHEREAS, as a catalyst for change, Sharon will always be remembered for her very special gifts, her positive approach to life, her exceptional wit and her sense of humor. She loved traveling, shopping and spending time with members of her family, especially her grandchildren. Sharon was also a woman who possessed a keen sense of fashion and style; she was a real "fashionista"; and

WHEREAS, Sharon had an extraordinary history of involvement in many professional and community-based organizations and committees and as a Community Builder and Activist Sharon served as: former President of the YWCA Board of Directors and Chair of the YWCA Racial Justice Committee; former Chair of the Buffalo and Erie County Public Library Board of Trustees; former Chairperson of the Erie County Commission on the Status of Women; Secretary of the Board of Directors of Women for Human Rights and Dignity, Inc. (WHRD); and former President of the Inner City Red Cross Board of Directors, as well as a member of the Regional Board of the Red Cross. Sharon was also affiliated with the Everywoman's Opportunity Center and the Women's Group; and

WHEREAS, Sharon has been the recipient of numerous awards and honors including the Community Service Award (Minority Bar Association); Bar Association of Erie County's Special Service Award in recognition of exceptional contributions to the legal community and justice system; YWCA Leader Luncheon Outstanding Achievement Award; Everywoman Opportunity Center Award of Excellence; 1490 Enterprises, Inc. Black Achievers in Industry Award; WNY Coalition of Blacks in the Courts Award; and the NYS Women in the Courts, 8th Judicial District Gender-Racial Fairness Committee's Lamplighter Award; and

WHEREAS, Sharon was preceded in death by her parents, Ruby Thomas and William Chandler; two brothers, Roy Thomas and Ronald Thomas and two half-sisters, Shirley Chandler and Mona Gayle Chandler. Left to celebrate her life is her loving life partner, Kenneth Johnson; one brother, Randolph (Ida) Adams; one sister, Darlene Thomas; one half-brother, two daughters, Felicia (Eric) Eve of Brooklyn, NY and Kimberly (Michael) Johnson; one stepdaughter Rona (Haashem) Drinkard of Bowie MD; Three Stepsons Dedric (Tamieka) Johnson, Eric Johnson and Tauhid Nur of Atlanta, GA; sixteen grandchildren, Natisha Jimerson, Robert L. Allen III, Arian Johnson, Dejaniece Johnson, Whitney Noble, Nylah Diggs, Haashim Drinkard, Jr., Tauhid Nur Jr., Michael V. Eve, Michael A. Chambliss, Jr., Madison Eve, Eric Johnson Jr, Quentin Johnson, Maxwell T. Eve, Tenanya Johnson, and Miles Brooks; and one great granddaughter, Londyn Nance; and a host of other relatives and friends.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Erie County Legislature does hereby mourn the passing of Sharon Ann Thomas and pause in its deliberations to honor and celebrate the Life of Mrs. Thomas, and offer our thoughts, prayers and deepest sympathy to Sharon Ann Thomas's family, friends, and colleagues.

Hon. Betty Jean Grant
Democratic Minority Leader
Erie County Legislator, 2nd District

Karen M. McCarthy
Clerk of the Erie County Legislature